

# **ARCHITECTURAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

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## WHO SHOULD USE THIS BOOK

The purpose of this manual is to provide the property *owner, builder/developer*, and persons interested in preservation with a broad sampling of the many things you need to know about rehabilitating historic buildings or building new structures in historic areas of Riverside and about how good rehabilitation and design can enhance the value of the property and the neighborhood.

If you are *interested in preservation and in buying an historic house*, you may find this a helpful guide to selecting one of Riverside's in-town neighborhoods. If you are simply and interested observer, you will find you can learn a lot about your city by looking carefully at the city record of its past—its neighborhoods and its architecture.

If you are a *professional concerned with development* within an historic neighborhood, this manual will let you know up front what you can expect when your project is reviewed by City staff and the Cultural Heritage Board. Good design sensitive to the historic character of an area will always streamline the approval process.

This manual is presented to give you an overview and start in the direction of preservation and good design. The knowledge, advice, and direction of trained City staff people and your friends and neighbors interested in preservation can provide the impetus to carry the job through and the camaraderie to make it fun.

# HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

If you have decided, based on the prior section, that you can benefit from at least some of the information found in this manual, here's how to find what you need to know.

Is my property located within a **historic district** or specially designated area?  
*Contact City Planning Department*

What **architectural style** or period is my house?  
*Local Architectural Styles, page 6*

What are the rules/guidelines for fixing up an **existing home**?  
*Rehabilitation of Existing Structures, page 68*

What are the rules/guidelines for building **new structures**?  
*New Construction in Older Neighborhoods, page 74*

What do all these **technical terms** mean?  
*Terms and Definitions, page 58*

What **color** should I paint my house?  
*Color, page 63*

How do I get the squeak in my hardwood floor to stop?

Which type of handrail should I put on my porch?

How do I teach my contractor the correct way to repair historic siding?  
*Rehab Tips and Techniques, page 17*

Where can I get help or **more information**?  
*Further Help and Resources, page 76*

While this manual tries to provide as many of the basics as possible, there may be many things you want to know that simply could not be included. For example, financing mechanisms and incentive programs are an important reason for any property owner to undertake rehabilitation. Information about current financial assistance programs is available through the City Redevelopment Agency and the City Planning Department.

Riverside is fortunate to have several **preservation groups**, including a City Council-appointed Cultural Heritage Board, Downtown Renaissance and Old Riverside Foundation, all of whom can offer advice or direction. Rehabilitation of historic buildings can be exciting and fun and—because of financing programs and tax incentives—profitable. Local people involved in this process can be the best resource for up-to-date information—from how to remove paint from wood beamed ceilings to who is the appropriate contact person for local financing programs.

**“T**he surest test of the civilization of a people...is to be found in their architecture, which presents so noble a field for the display of the grand and the beautiful, and which, at the same time, is so intimately connected with the essential comforts of life.”

—*Prescott, 1796–1859*



CITRUS WORKERS HELPED TO GIVE RIVERSIDE THE HIGHEST PER CAPITA INCOME IN THE COUNTRY AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY.



AS RIVERSIDE'S FAME AS A MEDITERRANEAN OASIS SPREAD, TOURISTS FROM THE EAST FLOCKED TO THE CITY FOR THE SUN AND PRODUCE. IN THIS 1927 PHOTO, CITY OFFICIALS AND RESIDENTS MEET A TRAIN OF VISITORS.



FRANK AND ISABELLA MILLER BUILT THE FAMOUS MISSION INN IN DOWNTOWN RIVERSIDE. HERE THEY STAND IN FRONT OF THE ARCHING ENTRANCE TO THE HOTEL.

## EARLY RIVERSIDE HISTORY IN A NUTSHELL

**T**he historic architecture of the city of Riverside is one of its most important resources. It gives the city its face, its personality and calls to the visitor or resident to enjoy a sense of the earlier life of the city.

**W**hen Teddy Roosevelt visited Riverside in 1903, the grandeur that was Riverside in the early 1900's was represented in its fine avenues, well-kept homes and quality commercial districts. Presidents Benjamin Harrison, William McKinley, William Taft and Herbert Hoover, along with Teddy Roosevelt, also visited the city and admired its beauty. Notable buildings such as the Southern Pacific Depot (1898), First Church of Christ Scientist (1900), Union Pacific Depot (1904), Old City Hall (1924), and the Riverside County Courthouse (1904) were built in this era. The residential districts included stately Victorians surrounded by orange groves, charming bungalows and the spacious Spanish and Mediterranean Revival homes.

**T**he city of Riverside was a planned community from its origins in September, 1870, when John W. North and Dr. James P. Greves spent their first night on the site of the city-to-be. They had set out to found a colony in California, set up excursion trips and formed an association to buy the land. John Goldsworthy laid out a square-mile town site, familiarly known as the Mile Square. The eastern boundary, Olive Street, is now the railroads, but the west (Pine Street), north (First Street), and south (Fourteenth Street) boundaries all remain. Main, Market, Seventh (now Mission Inn Avenue) and Eighth (now University Avenue) were designed as the grand avenues (99 feet wide) and bounded a central square called the Plaza.

**G**rowth and prosperity in Riverside began with two events of great importance to the local economy: the introduction of the Bahia Navel Orange (the navel which we eat today) in about 1873, and the arrival of the transcontinental railroad connection in 1876. Riverside had the perfect climate for the cultivation of this delicious navel orange and the railroad connection to shipping nationwide. During the 1880s, engineers and developers brought in the necessary water for irrigation via the Gage and other canal systems. The stage was set for a great city to be built. And it was.

**D**ue to the events and to the industry of the people who lived here, Riverside became the wealthiest city per capita in the nation during the 1890s. Such wealth and civic pride led to the development of the great homes, business buildings and civic structures that gave Riverside its character and identity, and attracted many visitors and guests to its famed Mission Inn. The great character of the city lives on in its historic landmarks, its beautiful older neighborhoods, and its people.

## LOCAL ARCHITECTURAL STYLES WHAT KIND OF HOUSE IS YOURS?

Many of us think of houses in terms of a home—the people, the furnishings, and the activities that make a place special to us. Most of us would answer “what kind of house is yours?” with “three bedroom, two bath,” or “new” or “old.”

*Architectural style*, however, is a summary or composite of the design, shape, form and building materials that make up a building. Where the building is truly “designed” all of the elements—from the doorknobs, to the floor plan, to the window sizes and to the roof line—relate to one another consistently and coherently. Yet that does not mean that each representative of a style is a “cookie-cutter” duplicate of any other building in that style. Rather, the style reflects a way of thinking about living and working spaces and about decorative elements.

Architectural styles reflect the way people live, or would like to live, and thus tell us *something about the people who lived in these buildings when they were built* and about the designers and builders who created them.

Certain styles were built within fairly well-defined periods of time within the city of Riverside. For that reason, the architectural styles described in this section are also discussed as periods in architecture and are assigned specific dates.

***Neither the styles nor the period dates will apply to every structure.***

Each is meant to be indicative of the general trend of development in Riverside. You may have an excellent Victorian home that was not built prior to 1900 or a Period Revival home built after 1935. You may also find that your Craftsman home does not have several of the elements described, but has, instead, a number of unique hand-crafted elements. While some of the variations that can be seen on the streets of Riverside occur because of misguided remodeling, there is also a great deal of influence or cross-breeding between styles that make each building unique. Some historic houses (especially the smaller bungalow styles) were built from pattern books that allowed the buyer to be his own designer and to mix and match elements to create his own idea of the perfect home.

Once you have studied the text and the drawings you will find many historic structures call out for your attention; little bungalows, which are often ignored, can now be appreciated and the potential grandeur in that run-down Craftsman house can be envisioned. The primary purpose of this section is not only to help people appreciate architecture of the past, but especially to help people with an interest in rehab to carry in their mind’s eye a *vision of what that particular building once was and what it can be again.*

## VICTORIAN PRE-1900

ABOUT 1870 TO 1900

*This Victorian house illustrates many characteristic features of the style: the vertical design, clapboard siding, decorative shingles in the gable and the decorative wood trims along the porch.*



3891 Tenth St.

**M**any older neighborhoods in Riverside contain examples of this period which incorporate styles such as Queen Anne, Eastlake, and Italianate. All of these styles are easily recognizable and distinctive from other periods by their generous carved wood ornamentation and distinctive roof styles. Although each style has distinguishing features, the residences of this period “borrowed” considerably from each other and therefore few pure examples exist.

**T**he interiors of the buildings were equally ornate, with complex, irregular floor plans. The interior spaces were decorated with wainscoting and high plaster ceilings with coves or intricate plaster cornices. Some examples contained decorative wood paneled ceilings.

### Characteristics

- One to three stories
- Emphasis on vertical lines and forms
- Wood framed “balloon framing” construction
- Wood shiplap or clapboard siding
- Varied siding styles on one building
- Penetration and projections from the building plane
- Bay windows
- Towers
- Porches
- Balconies
- Multi-plane, steep roof
- Second floor turrets
- Wood shingle roofing
- Tall chimneys
- Asymmetrical composition

### Ornamentation

- Decorative wood shingles
- Exterior carved wood panels
- Molded wood trim around windows and doors
- Trim to mimic keystones, cornerstones, and bracketing at cornices
- Ornate doors and windows (carved frames, stained glass, etc.)
- Decorative columns and balustrades (handrails)
- Decorative facias and barge boards
- Iron or wood roof cresting with finials on the roof ridges



## TURN OF THE CENTURY

ABOUT 1900 TO 1910

The styles found in this period include those known as the Classic Box, Neoclassical, Colonial Influence, and Eastern Shingle. Although slightly different in proportion, length of eaves, and material differences—wood siding, shingles and other variations—the buildings of this period have many common features.

The interiors of this period also were very simple, with functional, less elaborate spaces containing little ornamentation when compared with the ornateness of the Victorian.

### Characteristics

- One and two stories
- Wood clapboard siding
- Simple rectangular form
- Porches
- Gable or hip roof, not steeply pitched
- Wood shingle siding
- Symmetrical design
- Single, centrally located dormer

### Ornamentation

- Simple “classic” columns and balustrades
- Sheet metal ridge cap and scroll finial

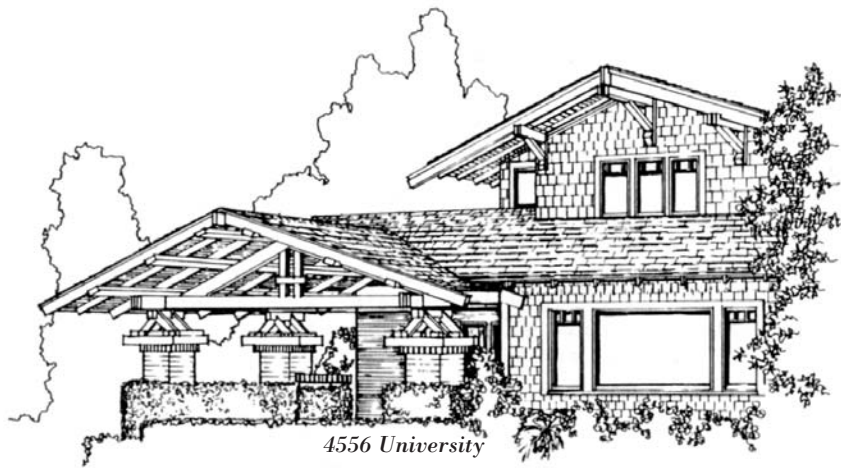


3234 Orange

*This Turn of the Century house illustrates the more “classical” form of this period, and has both clapboard siding and shingle siding.*







## CRAFTSMAN

ABOUT 1910 TO 1920

*This Craftsman house illustrates the horizontal design, wood shingles exterior, and exposed beams at the porch area typical of the period.*

**T**his period generally presents one to one-and-one-half story houses, with the larger two-story houses known as the “Craftsman” style, while the smaller homes spawned by this stylistic movement became known as bungalows. The buildings were often heavily landscaped to further emphasize a strong relationship to nature.

### Characteristics

- Square or rectangular form
- Emphasis on horizontal lines and forms
- Shallow roof pitches
- Gable roof with wood shingle roofing
- Porches or arbors
- Clapboard siding (sometimes rough sawn)
- Wood shingle or shake siding
- Exposed beams at the eaves supported with knee-braces back to walls
- Horizontal windows/casement or double-hung
- Upper portion of windows multi-paned, lower portion single pane

### Ornamentation

- River-rock foundations, occasionally with brick accents
- Brick masonry foundations laid in a variety of bonds
- Individualized ornamentation by each “craftsman” (builder)
- Columns and balustrades of plain milled wood





3876 Third

## BUNGALOW

ABOUT 1906 TO 1925

*This example contains many of the features and forms particular to the bungalow style, notably the low pitched roof with the gabled end facing the street and the thick tapering columns set on broad piers.*

**T**his style is used to describe both the craftsman bungalow and the California bungalow. They are similar in form and color to the structures of the Craftsman period described previously, but are smaller in size, and usually not as elaborate.

The main emphasis of this period is simple and inexpensive housing. The introduction of plaster exteriors greatly reduced construction time and costs. Bungalows imitated the design characteristics of the larger craftsman homes, and were designed to achieve affordability.

### Characteristics

- Square or rectangular form
- Resawn siding
- Shingle siding
- Plaster exterior
- Emphasis on horizontal line
- Low pitched roof
- Gable roof facing the street
- Front porch to one side of the front with two wood, plaster or stone piers, narrower at the top than the bottom
- Three piece front window with large center section and smaller side panels
- Some exposed beams with knee-braces

### Ornamentation

- Simple columns or balustrades on the porch of plain milled wood

## MEDITERRANEAN PERIOD REVIVAL

ABOUT 1890 TO 1935

*This Mediterranean Revival home illustrates the characteristic use of tile roofs, rounded arches and cylindrical turrets on entry bays.*



**O**f all the residential periods, the Period Revivals have the least number of common elements among their members. The names of the styles exemplify the previously established architectural style which this period attempts to “revive.” Riverside has a variety of Period Revival styles, including Mission or Mediterranean Revival, French Provincial (see next page), Country English, and English Tudor.

**T**he interiors of these houses often contained textured plaster, wrought iron fixtures, and bright colored decorative tile in the bathrooms and kitchens. The living rooms sometimes had cathedral or barrel ceilings, and often had stenciled decoration on the beams, doors and borders.

**T**he Mediterranean Revival emulates the styles of Spain, Italy and Northern Africa (Islamic influences, rarely seen in Riverside).

### Characteristics

- Wood stud construction
- Exterior light toned lath and plaster
- Intersecting rectangular forms or a single rectangle
- Wood casement or double-hung windows, often with arched top
- Tile roof, low pitched
- Porches on front or side

### Ornamentation

- Ornate low-relief carvings around arches, columns, windows, etc.
- Decorative iron work
- Patterned or plain tile on floors and walls



4648 Ladera Lane



4525 Orange St.

## FRENCH PROVINCIAL PERIOD REVIVAL

ABOUT 1890 TO 1935

*This French Provincial Revival home exhibits the use of half-timbered gables and sloping pitched roofs typical of the style.*

**T**he French Provincial, Normandy style, and the Tudor Revival were products of memory from the United States' involvement in World War I. These revived styles used few of the building materials of the original period because of advances in building technology, but forms mimicked the originals.

### Characteristics

- Wood stud construction
- Exterior light toned plaster
- Intersecting rectangular forms or a single rectangle
- Wood-framed windows with multiple panes
- Steeply pitched roof
- Shingle or shake roof
- Heavy wooden front door
- Brick chimney

### Ornamentation

- Stone, brick, and half-timber look for decorative purposes



**POST WWII  
VERNACULAR  
ABOUT 1945 TO 1955**



**A**fter the war, housing was in short supply and affordable, single-family housing was needed. The houses built at this time took as models the basic tenets of their predecessors, such as gable roofs, and wood or stucco exterior finishing, but began an important derivation in the house's relationship to the automobile: for the first time on any large scale, garages were often attached to the dwellings and increasingly became part of the front elevation. New building materials resulting from war-time technology such as plywood and aluminum would transform the way floors and windows, to mention a few elements, were constructed.

**Characteristics**

- Single story
- Square or rectangular intersecting forms
- Gable roof, low to medium pitch, with gable parallel or perpendicular to the street
- Wood casement or double hung windows with a variety of pane styles
- Metal casement windows
- Some garages attached and toward the front of the house
- Shingle or crushed rock roofing

**Ornamentation**

- Decorative shutters
- Simple wooden columns



**CALIFORNIA  
RANCH  
POST 1945**



**T**his long, horizontal style was popular in both tract and custom housing for several decades after World War II. It was reminiscent of a ranch house from a real cattle ranch and from the western films popular at the time.

**Characteristics**

- Single story of long rectangular forms
- Low pitched hip or gable roof with wide overhangs
- Exterior stucco, board and batten, shingles, clapboard or a combination of these
- Horizontal bands of windows with a variety of pane styles, including single panes and multi-paned diamonds
- Sliding glass doors to patios and terraces
- Interior spaces open and of low horizontal scale
- Long, low porches with simple columns creating the feel of an arcaded walkway
- Concrete slab foundation

**Ornamentation**

- Decorative shutters
- Some western motifs in fencing and handrails



## MODERN

ABOUT 1945 TO 1965



**T**he Modern, or International style, developed in Europe earlier in the century. It is a style which became more widely used for commercial and institutional buildings than for residences. Residential examples are limited in Riverside, but those that exist are generally intact and well maintained. This style is based on simple geometric lines and shapes, and a blending of interior and exterior spaces, thus the use of glass walls and floor planes extending beyond the walls to visually eliminate barriers between the inside of the house and the out-of-doors.

### Characteristics

- One to two stories, some split levels
- Rectangular or square intersecting or singular forms
- Emphasis on clean geometric shapes and horizontal planes
- Flat roof plane and floor plane that often extend beyond the walls
- Sometimes appear to be floating above the ground plane
- Few solid exterior walls, mostly glass; or solid walls with few windows
- Few interior walls, open floor plans
- Constructed of concrete, glass, steel and concrete block
- Fixed or louvered windows
- Crushed rock roofing

### Ornamentation

- None (a hallmark of the style)
- Simple railings or columns made of steel

## COMMERCIAL ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

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**M**any historic and modern styles of commercial architecture are found in Riverside. Descriptions of these styles may be found in “Restoration Riverside: Downtown Rehabilitation and Design Guidelines.” Changes or additions to existing commercial structures should reflect the architectural integrity of the original designs. When new buildings are proposed in commercial areas, they should be compatible with established buildings in the area.

Development within the downtown business core is governed by “Riverside Downtown Design Guidelines,” available through the City of Riverside Planning Department. For guidance on commercial development within other areas of the city, contact the Planning Department.

